



## State of New Jersey

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### **McGREEVEY UNVEILS NEW NAME, MISSION FOR DEPARTMENT OF LABOR**

*Legislation consolidates all workforce-training programs under newly named Department of Labor and Workforce Development, for greater efficiency and access*

(TRENTON) – New Jersey’s workforce development system, which has already achieved great success by training thousands of workers at more than 400 businesses, will become stronger and more efficient under a bill Governor James E. McGreevey signed today.

The 27 workforce training programs were previously scattered among three State departments, each with its own bureaucracy and set of requirements. Under the signed bills A2617/S1452, all 27 programs will be consolidated under the State Department of Labor. The Department itself will get a new name, Governor McGreevey announced today: The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

The consolidation represents Governor McGreevey’s plan to provide “one-stop shopping” for career needs, from training to job placement. The change will improve efficiency and help keep New Jersey competitive in tomorrow’s economy.

The following programs are being transferred to the Department of Labor and Workforce Development: Work First New Jersey; Adult Basic Education/English as a Second Language; and apprenticeship programs including the Youth Transitions to Work Partnership Act.

“Today’s economy is knowledge-based. Jobs are more technical, and require more skills than ever before. To succeed, today’s workers must be highly skilled and highly adaptable. And today we’re making sure training will be available to more workers than ever before – from the most basic skills needed to apply for that first job, to the latest high-tech skills,” Governor McGreevey said.

“Our economy is leading the nation and the Northeast. Today there are more people employed in New Jersey than ever in our history. We have regained 100 percent of the jobs – and then some – that were lost during the national recession, while the nation has only regained 53 percent of the jobs it lost. Our highly skilled workforce helped us build that success – and now we’re poised for even more growth,” the Governor continued.

As part of Wednesday’s ceremony, the Labor Department’s auditorium was renamed “The Commissioner Albert G. Kroll Auditorium” to honor the Commissioner who plans to leave his office at the end of June.

“By consolidating these programs under the Department of Labor and Workforce Development, we’ll be able to spend money more effectively, come up with a clear plan for how to develop the workforce for the future, and make sure those plans are administered by a single entity in conjunction with our county and local partners,” Commissioner Kroll said.

These programs will be integrated into the existing system of One Stop Career Centers, which have been opened across the State. Each citizen in search of career-building help – from advanced training to basic literacy or English as a Second Language, to help with childcare or transportation – now has a single point of entry.

This plan has been the vision of John J. Heldrich, workforce development expert and founder of the John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at Rutgers University. The consolidation of programs was accomplished through the efforts of Governor McGreevey, Commissioner Kroll and the Legislature. As part of today's ceremony, the Governor presented Mr. Heldrich with the William Heartwell, Jr. Award from the National Association of State Workforce Agencies. The award is given annually to an individual outside the workforce system who has made a substantial contribution to the system.

Heldrich, a former executive with Johnson and Johnson, became the leading spokesman for building alliances between government and the private sector to help improve workforce skills. He was a former head of the State Employment and Training Commission and later founded and funded the John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at Rutgers University.

"Today is a historic day in the state of New Jersey. Today we are continuing the work we started with the Work First New Jersey program by offering citizens a hand up, instead of a hand out," said Senator Wayne R. Bryant, a primary sponsor of the legislation. "For some, the Department of Labor and Workforce Development will bridge the gap between a rehabilitation center and a better life. For others, the Department will serve as a resource center to help the recently unemployed find new employment. And for some it will serve as an opportunity for career advancement."

"Unemployment is difficult enough without the added stress of having to navigate the state's job retaining bureaucracy," said Assemblywoman Bonnie Watson Coleman, another primary sponsor. "Combining all the state's employment services and projects under one department will help unemployed and displaced workers to start new careers and secure new jobs."

Since the McGreevey Administration began in January 2002, the State has invested \$47.9 million in training grants, to train 88,977 workers at more than 400 companies. These included customized training grants, which help businesses stay competitive by providing their employees the most advanced training.

These grants make a difference. Studies have shown that high school graduates who take job-training courses earn 26 percent more, on average, than their classmates who do not. A Rutgers study showed that laid-off workers who participated in State-funded training programs had an easier time finding new jobs and recovering lost wages.

Studies have also shown that training can help a company increase productivity by 15 percent or more. For example, Tri-Tech Tool & Design, of South Bound Brook, with a \$22,000 customized training grant saw sales increase by \$300,000.

Businesses or individuals interested in learning more about New Jersey's training opportunities can call **1-877-US2JOBS**. Information for teens is available online at [www.njnextstop.org](http://www.njnextstop.org).

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